

SUMMARIES OF KEY POLICY DOCUMENTS IN THE 1980S ¹

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Abstract

This paper provides summaries of the recommendations of eight government reports on adult and community education that were published between 1985 and 1989, together with a brief description of the background to each of these reports.

¹ Published in Addison, Alan, Fowler, Diane & McGray, Dorothy (Eds) *Information Kit: Adult and Community Education Policy Project*, Auckland: NZ Association for Community and Continuing Education and NZ National Commission for UNESCO, 1993.

Summaries of Key Documents in the 1980s

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"Immediate Policy Directions for Community & Continuing Education" Summary of Report to the Minister of Education from Stella Maris Conference, 1985

In March 1985 the Minister of Education asked the Department of Education to convene a meeting of individuals and representatives of a number of organisations. His brief to the meeting was to suggest mechanisms for consultation, co-ordination and improved communication between the various adult education organisations and groups, and between these organisations and the Minister, and to examine such issues as the restructuring of the NCAE, adult education legislation, the role of the Department of Education in nonformal learning, the provision of resources, the place of research, and ways of improving access and opportunities, and information flows, and of strengthening networks. The group, consisting of 30 or 40 people, met on three occasions between May and August, and in September 1985 presented its report containing suggestions for developments in the immediate and medium term.

The Minister had on several occasions referred to the 1976 UNESCO recommendations on adult education especially in the context of social equity and adult education. The report of the group picked up on this and pointed out that these recommendations recognised "...the potential of adult education as a powerful agent of change... (which) requires consideration of both the focus of adult education and the issue of access to adult learning opportunities."

The report went on to state: "All adults have cultural and educational interests. These are not, however, all afforded equal recognition. People in low wage and benefit dependent households and people in other low income situations are the most economically and socially vulnerable. Within this group, Maori, people with Pacific origins, women, young people, the disabled and those in isolated rural areas are especially vulnerable. Urgent priority must be given to recognising and supporting these New Zealanders' educational interests, both as learners and as

contributors to learning. This is the primary focus of this document. We identify economically and socially vulnerable New Zealanders as the 'priority group'.

"Realising the Government's social equity goals will require the provision of learning opportunities that enable people to understand the personal, economic, social and political realities of their lives. This needs to be linked to appropriate, practical, effective action designed to redress social inequities.

"Such learning will be enhanced when the control of resources, the initiation, management and evaluation of learning are in the hands of members of the priority group itself...

"Giving effect to the government's social equity policies will also require existing educational agencies to re-focus their priorities. The Minister has already taken some initiatives to have governing bodies become more representative of wider interests. Institutions and agencies should:

- devote more resources to the priority group;
- make facilities, staffing allocations and funding available to all community education groups, in particular to those providers of nonformal education who have difficulty in obtaining access to resources.

"Much nonformal learning occurs independent from established educational institutions and agencies. In many cases learning opportunities involving the priority group are offered by organisations whose primary function is not education. Nevertheless these organisations perform an important educational role that is as valid as the more formal and which needs to be recognised and supported through Vote: Education...

"Implementation of the suggestions made in this document will require adult educators, institutions and agencies to make a commitment to the priority group. This demands improved communication and coordination and the sharing of information with each other and people in the priority group."

The report then went on to suggest a range of more or less specific mechanisms and policies that should be set in place nationally by government, the Department of Education, the National Council of Adult Education (NCAE) and the NZACCE, as well as by technical institutes, community colleges and schools. These included suggestions intended to give priority groups and individuals direct

access to information, policy formation and decision making at national and local levels, including representation on advisory, policy making and controlling bodies, invitations to attend forums, conferences, etc.

Active outreach and encouragement by agencies and national bodies could be achieved by such steps as the following: Changes in the methods of appointing staff who would work in adult and community education in the department of education and more adequate resourcing of that section of the department's work; the re-establishment of field officer positions attached to the NCAE (Prior to 1963 these had included people working in such fields as Maori and Pacific Island education, adult literacy, media liaison, and training and development.); the establishment of non-teaching community education positions with the necessary resources in technical institutes and community colleges; and the allocation of sufficient resources to schools to enable them to make worthwhile contact with the priority groups and arrange appropriate learning opportunities, such resources to be 'tagged' and not absorbed into general school funds.

In addition it was suggested that priority groups and individuals should have the right of access to the facilities and resources of educational institutions, and that urgent attention should be given to extending the tertiary study grant and the range of learning opportunities that qualify for this assistance and that further consideration be given to the provision of paid educational leave for purposes other than trade union education.

A further set of suggestions were directed at the allocation of resources to autonomous nonformal groups. Three levels of funding were considered - small grants, project funding, and block grants. This funding was to be administered independently of any involvement by educational institutions. The group ended its report by advocating a revision of the educational legislation to give lifelong learning statutory recognition and the appointment of a working party to do some of the work which it had not had the time or resources to do.

In summary, then, the report identified itself closely with the equity issues which were the declared focus of the government's social and educational reform initiatives. It endorsed the view that adult education had the potential to be an agent of change. It argued that priority should be given to recognising and

supporting the educational interests of those who are economically and socially vulnerable, both as learners and contributors to learning. It then went on to emphasise the importance of providing recognition and support for non-formal learning in which the control of resources and the initiation, management and evaluation of learning are in the hands of economically and socially vulnerable groups, and to recommend a range of more or less specific mechanisms and policies that should be set in place nationally by government, the department of education, the NCAE and the NZACCE, as well as by educational institutions to ensure that the interests of these groups are served more effectively.

Report of the Lifelong Learning Task Force, November, 1985

Two months after the presentation of the previous report, the National Council of Adult Education (NCAE) published the report of its Task Force which had been set up in September 1984. The underlying philosophy of the Task Force was not dissimilar to that of the previous group (of which the members of the Task Force had been a part). Like the previous report it emphasised the importance of non-formal education and of establishing structures and policies which would enable 'people experiencing inequity' to define their own learning and action agendas. The report sought to oppose a 'deficit' and 'treatment' model of education in which educators or institutions plan and provide 'targetted' assistance or learning opportunities for 'disadvantaged' people. It also rejected an individualistic, social mobility model of adult education, suggesting that much formal education made little or no contribution to social change since it was largely concerned with producing new elites.

Instead of these models the report used concepts such as 'structural violence', 'victimisation by labelling', 'apathy - culture of silence' to explain the sources of inequity in society. To emphasise the importance of the people themselves defining their own situations and setting their own educational and action agendas rather than being labelled by others, the Task Force used the phrase 'people experiencing inequity' as a key category. It emphasised the major potential contribution of non-formal adult education in helping 'people experiencing inequity' to achieve their goals, and thus drew attention to the close links that it considered must be maintained between adult education and non-formal learning and the development of social policy. It stressed that the central

tasks were to promote lifelong learning concepts at national and local levels and to provide support and resources for the development and sustenance of 'autonomous learning initiatives' by individuals and groups.

Crucial to the thinking of the Task Force was the view that there was an important place for resource people - highly skilled adult educators/community workers in paid and unpaid positions who would undertake the 'animation' task. It was acknowledged that 'people experiencing inequity' often required assistance and support if they were to engage in 'autonomous learning initiatives'. These 'animators' were to be grouped within a newly created Project Development Services Unit, and they too would need on-going training and support. It recommended that funding decisions should be made on the basis of negotiated guidelines by decision-making groups comprising one or two members of the learning group, two trusted peers, a member of the Project Development Services Unit, and a person appointed by NCAE.

A major recommendation of the report, then, was that a 'third channel' should be established for funding adult and non-formal education or "lifelong learning, particularly in the non-formal sector, according to the social equity criteria". This funding channel would parallel those for universities and for polytechnics and community colleges. It was envisaged that the NCAE would play a major role in bringing the proposals to fruition and in implementing them.

The report drew attention to the very limited financial resources currently allocated by the state to 'non-formal' i.e. non-institutional community education: For 1985-6 it estimated that only \$630,532 or 0.03% of Vote: Education had been allocated to this. In order to secure the resources required to implement its proposals, the report proposed that "...the Cabinet Social Equity Committee negotiate within Government to obtain funds through Vote: Education to support (the) new channel for funding non-formal learning, (that these) funds would be available for learning activities in accordance with criteria which reflect the Government's commitment to social equity (and that) the criteria would be established by negotiation between the Cabinet Social Equity Committee and the National Council of Adult Education."

"The management, funding, and organisation of continuing education and training" Report by a Ministerial Working Party, March 1987

The terms of reference of this Working Party required it to examine the advantages and disadvantages associated with the following four options which had been proposed in order to give technical institutes greater autonomy: (a) a stand alone Technical Institute Grants Authority which would be the equivalent of the University Grants Committee; (b) a Technical Institute Grants Committee working in association with the department of education; (c) a separate or sub-department of state for continuing education; and (d) a separate Polytechnic Authority for all polytechnic activities. It was then required to make a recommendation on its preferred option and to bring to the minister's attention any other matters in connection with the proposal to establish a Technical Institute Grants Committee.

The working party took a very broad view of its terms of reference. Each of the above options was rejected. The reasons for their rejection lay in the perception that they either did not provide for a sufficient degree of autonomy of the continuing education sector from the department of education as a whole or that they did not give sufficient authority and/or recognition to the continuing education sector in the broader development of educational policy or that they fragmented the field of continuing education.

Accordingly the working party developed a new option which drew on some elements of options (c) and (d) above. It recommended that "... the continuing education sector, which includes the technical institutes and community colleges, be separated from the Department of Education, and that the present responsibilities of the Department in this area be transferred to a (new) Continuing Education and Training Board". It also recommended that the responsibilities of the Department of Labour in the broader field of training, including ACCESS, should be transferred to this board. The proposed board would thus have statutory responsibility for policy development and advice to the Minister to whom it would have direct access, as well as for the overall administration of the entire field of post-school or continuing education and training, except for the Teachers' Colleges and Universities. Furthermore it recommended that "... the Board be given the task of advising the Minister of

Education on the allocation of resources across the tertiary sector as a whole (and that) the present responsibility of the Department of Education for commenting on monies voted to the UGC by Parliament should pass to the Continuing Education and Training Board, and that it would be logical for funds allocated to the universities to be channelled through this Vote." This Board and its executive would be located within the Department of Education but would be independent of that section of the Department which was responsible for the administration and policy development for schools and teachers' colleges. Co-ordination of policy between the educational sectors, it was envisaged, would be achieved through an education executive committee made up of the chief executives responsible for each sector.

The working party envisaged greater devolution of authority and decision-making to continuing education and training institutions and agencies and recommended that this be achieved through the negotiation of charters and corporate plans between the state and the institutions and agencies. It argued that many agencies and institutions and particularly the polytechnics and community colleges had come to serve as instruments of state labour market and social policy and that these functions could be maintained through the charter framework. In addition it recommended that institutions should be encouraged to undertake an entrepreneurial role.

The working party envisaged that the field of non-formal and community education would form part of this wider field of post-school or continuing education and that voluntary organisations and community groups would receive their funding through the Board and not through any 'third channel', though some separate advisory group/s would be required.

The second report of the Task Force on Trade Union Education, March 1987

This report reviewed the historical and social context and the rationale which underlay government policies on the education of trade union members and working people generally. It argued that in a modern, mixed, industrial economy, trade unions are expected by their members, governments, employers and the wider community to participate in a wide range of economic, cultural and social

activities and decisions. If trade unions were to play this wider role effectively and democratically it was important not only that trade union members and their representatives develop the necessary knowledge, skills and attitudes, but also that knowledge and understanding of trade unions and industrial relations be developed in the wider community. It also drew on the ideas of advocates of the importance of lifelong learning who argue the right of the individual to play a full, active and democratic role in all spheres of economic, political, social and cultural life, including the workplace. In general, although the Task Force took the education of trade union members and of the wider community about trade unions as its starting points, it moved a long way beyond this to examine the interests of working people, and especially those of Maoris and Pacific Islanders and women. It then engaged in a critique of the ways in which a range of institutions including schools, teachers colleges, polytechnics, adult education agencies, universities and the Broadcasting Corporation generally failed to serve and reflect these interests.

Its recommendations were wide-ranging. They called for a wider recognition of trade unions as agents of change; for more democratic unionism; for action against discrimination based on gender, race or culture and for moves toward bi-culturalism both in unions and in workplaces; for government, employers, unions, the TUEA and educational institutions to respond positively to representations made by Pacific Island workers; and for recognition by all involved in curriculum development and teaching at all educational levels of the importance of achieving a better balance in the curriculum so that people may be assisted to become 'active, participatory citizens'.

The Task Force undertook a critique of the field of adult education. It identified three trends: Firstly, it suggested that there was an increasing emphasis on narrow vocational education and training. Much tertiary education currently seeks to satisfy this demand, which within a context of high unemployment tends to be driven increasingly by the short-term requirements of the labour market; Secondly, there was an emergence of adult education "welfarism" - a mix of social work and the development of coping skills, coupled with a tendency to define social and economic issues such as youth unemployment as educational problems; The third trend, it argued, was a reaction to the former two, and consisted of a resurgence of collective self-education generally taking place

within the context of social movements and independently of educational institutions. The Task Force placed a high priority on the provision of support and resources for this form of education. However it did suggest that the interaction between social movements and educational organisations could be highly productive. It then called for much greater involvement by, and sensitivity towards the interests of, trade unions and working class people generally in all aspects of post school education and suggested that project funding should be available for independent movement-based education and also that established educational organisations should seek to establish closer links with these movements.

"He Tangata" Report of the Interim Advisory Group on Non-formal Education, September 1987

An Interim Advisory Group on Non-formal Education had been established by the Minister of Education in 1986 when he withdrew funding from the NCAE. This group presented its report to the Minister of Education in September 1987. The group's focus had been directed to those forms of adult education which take place outside educational institutions. It argued that the essential distinguishing features of non-formal education lay in the fact that it was controlled by the groups of learners themselves 'independently of imposed curricula, of outside professionals or of institutions'. It noted that probably as much as 80% of deliberate learning takes place outside institutions, but that less than 0.01% of the education budget is devoted to non-formal i.e. non-institutional education. It argued further that a good deal of this self-education is undertaken by those who have long since been alienated from formal education.

In view of this it recommended that funding to non-formal education should be progressively increased over three years to 2% of the post school education budget. In addition, the group recommended that the NCAE be disestablished and that a 12-member Committee for Independent Learning Aotearoa/New Zealand(CILANZ), elected by groups and voluntary organisations involved in community and non-formal education and serviced by a small unit in the department of education to be called the Community Education and Development Unit, be set up 'to advise the minister of education on all aspects of non-formal learning, including community education programmes within

institutions, to consult with and respond to people involved in non-formal learning, to distribute funds to non-formal learning groups, and to promote and foster non-formal learning'. In addition, the group recommended that a national resource centre for adult education be set up as a trust or incorporated society with limited on-going funding and permanent staffing. Its members would include educational institutions as well as voluntary organisations and groups and it would carry out those other functions including communications, networking and research that had been undertaken by NCAE.

The Hawke Report, August 1988

By March 1988 the government had received reports from groups reviewing every aspect of post-school education. All these reports, as well as the report of the Royal Commission on Social Policy which was published in April 1988, were referred by the Social Equity Committee of Cabinet, to a Working Group of Officials convened by Professor Gary Hawke, Professor of Policy Studies at Victoria University of Wellington. The report of the group was published on 31 July, and was released for public discussion and comment in August 1988.

It is beyond the scope of this paper to summarise all aspects of this report. However it is important to identify the key themes and major recommendations. Post-compulsory education was defined to include senior classes in schools as well as schools-based continuing and community education, the wide range of labour market and community education undertaken by polytechnics, the pre-service and continuing professional education done by colleges of education, the advanced teaching and learning undertaken by universities, education and training undertaken by other state and private institutions, apprenticeships, on-the-job training, and non-formal education. Whilst not denying the differences between different forms of education and training provided in different institutions the group argued that 'any distinction between education and training should be avoided.' It thus supported an 'across the portfolios' approach to education and training, treating all institutions in a broadly similar fashion.

It also emphasised the lifelong nature of education. The report acknowledged its indebtedness to the Picot Report and suggested that it should be possible to apply similar management principles to the field of post-compulsory education. It

thus advocated decentralised decision-making wherever possible to the level of institutions, which should be funded on the basis of their charters and corporate plans and in the light of overall national priorities. It also supported the Picot recommendations regarding the establishment of a central Ministry concerned primarily with policy. On the question of the role of the state in post-compulsory education and training, the majority in the group rejected the arguments that post-compulsory education should be seen primarily in terms of private benefits and hence that the only justification of state involvement was to achieve greater equity and redistribute the costs so that they were more favourable to 'disadvantaged groups. In addition to seeking to ensure that 'Maori, Pacific Island people, women and other disadvantaged groups' not only have access to a wide range of education and training opportunities, but also that the education is appropriate and supportive, it argued that the state should see its role as going beyond issues of equity and seek to achieve such goals as excellence and social cohesion.

The report may in general be seen as providing a large measure of support for adult education as a whole. The legitimacy and importance of much labour market education and training as well as non-institutional or non-formal education which had previously received little recognition within the wider field of education is affirmed. The boundaries of non-formal education are broadened to make it more possible than previously to draw in those who are working in institutional adult education and to justify the funding of institutions as well as voluntary organisation and community groups to undertake community education. Moreover the purposes of non-formal education are broadened. Thus it is stated: 'Non-formal learning opportunities can encourage re-entry to further education, employment, or community service, can provide opportunities for mutual support, especially among women, can provide basic education for those who have not succeeded in the formal education system, and can strengthen community action and development.' Despite these progressive elements in the report, its overall philosophy nevertheless reflects the technicist and managerialist view of education which it had inherited from Picot and which perhaps was inevitable given that it was prepared primarily by a group of officials. In addition, as far as adult education is concerned, it was perhaps inevitable that it did nothing to call for a strengthening of CLANZ and the adult education resource centre or to

examine any of the other issues which had not been dealt with in the He Tangata. report.

Working Party on Non-formal and Community Education, May 1989

Immediately after announcing its decisions in *Learning for Life: One* the government set up a large number of working groups to take the policies a stage further. The terms of reference (or required 'outputs'!) of the Non-formal and Community Education and Training Working Group included the following: To produce a report which makes recommendations on the manner and method of funding and the accountability procedures for funds handled by: 1. Non-formal and community education funded by Vote: Education including that funded through the Community Learning Aotearoa/New Zealand (CLANZ) Advisory Committee; and 2. Non-formal and community education activities and programmes delivered through Universities, Colleges of Education, Polytechnics and Schools. It was required to consult with a wide range of organisations and to produce its report by the end of May 1989.

The working group sought to broaden and specify more precisely what it understood community education to be. It argued that community education 'refers to programmes and activities in which people participate to develop their potential and that of their communities. Normally, such activities are not part of a full-time education programme nor do they lead to recognised educational qualifications. They are not specifically employment directed or focused.' However it went on to suggest that there were close linkages between vocational and community education programmes, that the links could be strengthened if institutions made it possible for participants to include a selection of community education programmes in their vocational courses, and that it should be possible for non-formal and community education providers to seek validation and accreditation through NEQA, which body should have a standing committee on non-formal and community education.

The working group made a strong commitment to a number of principles. It argued that policies, structures and operations must be consistent with the spirit, rights and obligations embodied in the Treaty of Waitangi and that any system must enable Maori self-determination, full involvement in decision-making and

access to resources as accorded by the principles of partnership, protection and participation embodied in the treaty'. It argued that 'policies, structures and operations must seek to achieve equitable outcomes for people in the community - whatever their gender, sexuality, ethnicity, socio-economic status, marital status, age, ability or disability, rural or urban location. The principles of fairness and natural justice upon which equity is based require unequal inputs for equal outcomes. Persons, groups, communities and providers currently disadvantaged will require an extra share of resources'.

It advocated that barriers to access be removed, including lack of information, the cost of courses to some participants and lack of affordable child-care, and that there must be 'sensitivity to the needs and preferences of the tangata whenua and ethnic groups, women and groups considered to be socio-economically disadvantaged'. It argued for devolution of decision-making and that, in the case of community education, decisions must be made in partnership with the local community and in collaboration with other providers. It warned of the dangers of marginalisation of community education and emphasised that 'the same status must be accorded to the community education sector as is accorded other sectors of the post-compulsory sector. With the notable exception of those principles which emphasised co-operation and collaboration in decision-making, these liberal-progressive principles were all in accord with the rhetoric contained in Learning for Life: One. However they were stated far more strongly in the report of the working group.

As far as state funding was concerned, the group recommended that all educational institutions (schools, polytechnics, colleges of education and universities) and all voluntary organisations and groups wishing to obtain continuing funding from the state for community education would require a charter approved by the ministry of education and subject to review by the Review and Audit Agency using criteria developed in consultation with CLANZ. They would also require a proven record in community education, and an undertaking to provide services and resources to groups without charters and not to duplicate unnecessarily the functions of another local provider. They would be funded by the ministry on the basis of a formula that would be fully comparable with that used to fund other forms of post-compulsory education, but which would take into account the special features of community education. Groups,

voluntary organisations and organisations engaged in community education or wishing to do so but that did not have or want an approved charter could apply for funds to CLANZ for special projects or seeding grants as well as to other chartered providers for resources and services.

The group accorded CLANZ an even larger advisory and consultative role in the new structure than it had had under the previous one, and it re-affirmed the recommendations contained in *He Tangata* that a Community Education Development Unit be established in the Ministry of Education, and that a National Resource Centre with adequate funding be established. A key new recommendation by the group sought to set in place a structure which would facilitate co-operative planning and decision-making at the local level without creating a new organisation. It recommended that initial funding and assistance be made available from the Ministry to establish Community Education Networks in each district. It was envisaged that these would be built on existing local networks and would consist of members of organisations and individuals involved in community education. Their functions would include assessing local needs, monitoring and coordinating local provision, providing information to CLANZ on the granting and removal of charters, special grants to local groups, and needs for special research and other projects, and forwarding nominations to be considered for appointment to CLANZ. They would be formalised only to the extent that this would be necessary in order to meet formally at least three times a year, to report back to the wider community and annually to CLANZ. It was considered that once established they would not require on-going funding as their costs would be borne by local chartered providers.

Learning for Life: Two, August 1989

In August 1989, two month after the majority of the working groups had reported, the government published *Learning for Life: Two* - its second instalment of decisions in the process of reform of post-compulsory education. With regard to labour market education and training, the government announced that it had been decided that the Training Support Agency would now be called the Education and Training Support Agency, that it would be administered by a 12-member board appointed by the minister of education after consultation with the Regional Employment and Access Councils, the NZ Apprenticeship Committees,

the iwi authorities and the trade union movement and the Employers' Federation and would have regard for overall balance, including gender and ethnic balance. It would be established as a body corporate and would be chartered to the Ministry of Education. Relationships between the Education and Training Support Agency and NEQA would be investigated further and the Review and Audit Agency (now re-named the Education Review Office) would have the function of reviewing labour market programmes as well as all other programmes. The government also announced the establishment of a Vocational Guidance and Careers Advisory Agency which would be a free-standing agency chartered/contracted to the Ministry of Education. Its functions would be to: provide occupational, education and training information; provide training and consultancy for careers advisers, guidance and transition; and establish and operate a data base on vocational and careers information.

As far as community education is concerned, government accepted most of the recommendations of the working party. It re-affirmed community education as 'a legitimate form of continuing education along with general, vocational and professional provision in universities, colleges of education and polytechnics', and stated that providers could include these institutions as well as community groups, schools, and national organisations. They could be chartered to and funded by the ministry of education or they could be unchartered and be funded through 'chartered providers' or through grants from the committee of CLANZ. The decisions announced by government included the following: The funds allocated to community education programmes in schools would be re-distributed and re-allocated, based on the total population of the 11 districts of the ministry of education; A common funding mechanism to be known as a community education unit would be devised and funds based on this formula would be paid to community education providers as part of their bulk grants, the amount of the funding being determined by the ministry during charter negotiations; Boards of trustees of schools and councils of other education institutions with a community education component would be asked (rather than required as recommended by the working party) to include a community education member on their governing bodies; CLANZ would be chartered to the ministry of education, and charters along with peer and self review would be the mechanisms of accountability for it, as well as for all groups, organisations and institutions; The National Resource Centre would be established and funded by contract through CLANZ; CLANZ

would continue to advise the Minister on the distribution of grants for community education on the basis of criteria determined by CLANZ; The Ministry of Education in consultation with CLANZ would determine the criteria required for the approval of charters and corporate plans in the field of community education. In addition the government announced its agreement in principle to the establishment of the Community Education Networks recommended by the working party.

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May, 1993.